

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please amend Claims 1, 8, 43, and 57 and add Claims 62 and 63 to read as follows  
(a complete listing of the claims appears below).

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1. (Currently Amended) A distance-measuring device for measuring individual distances to a plurality of distance-measured regions, the distance-measuring device comprising:

a selection circuit for selecting at least one first measured distance-value from individually measured distance-values to the plurality of distance-measured regions, by excluding a plurality of second measured distance-values wherein the selection is effected, in response to a determination that the a plurality of second measured distance-values of the individually measured distance-values are not smaller than a predetermined distance value, from individually measured distance-values to the plurality of distance-measured regions by excluding the plurality of second measured distance-values; and

a computation circuit for computing an auto-focusing data value in accordance with the at least one first measured distance-value selected by said selection circuit.

2. (Previously Amended) A distance-measuring device according to Claim 1, wherein said computation circuit sets the auto-focusing data value to a value equal to a minimum permissible distance value in response to a determination that the computed auto-focusing data value is smaller than the minimum permissible distance value.

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3. (Previously Amended) A distance-measuring device according to Claim 1, wherein said computation circuit computes the auto-focusing data value from a mean value of the at least one first measured distance-value selected by said selection circuit.

4. (Previously Amended) A distance-measuring device according to Claim 1, wherein said computation circuit computes the auto-focusing data value from a majority of the at least one first measured distance-value selected by said selection circuit.

5. (Original) A distance-measuring device according to Claim 1, wherein the predetermined distance value is obtained from a focal distance of a lens used for auto-focusing.

6. (Original) A distance-measuring device according to Claim 1, wherein the predetermined distance value is obtained from an aperture value of a lens used for auto-focusing.

7. (Original) A distance-measuring device according to Claim 1, wherein a smallest measured distance-value serves as the auto-focusing data value when the measured distance-values to the plurality of distance-measured regions are not smaller than the predetermined distance value and are not selected by the selection circuit.

8. (Currently Amended) A camera including a distance-measuring device for measuring individual distances to a plurality of distance-measured regions, said camera comprising:

a selection circuit for selecting at least one first measured distance-value from individually measured distance-values to the plurality of distance-measured regions, by excluding a plurality of second measured distance-values wherein the selection is effected, in response to a determination that the a plurality of second measured distance-values of the individually measured distance-values are not smaller than a predetermined distance value, from individually measured distance-values to the plurality of distance-measured regions by excluding the plurality of second measured distance-values;

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a computation circuit for computing an auto-focusing data value in accordance with the at least one first measured distance-value selected by said selection circuit; and

a driving circuit for driving an image-forming lens in accordance with the auto-focusing data value computed by the computation circuit.

9. (Previously Amended) A camera according to Claim 8, wherein said computation circuit sets the auto-focusing data value to a value equal to a minimum permissible distance value in response to a determination that the computed auto-focusing data value is smaller than the minimum permissible distance value.

15. (Currently Amended) A method of measuring individual distances to a plurality of distance-measured regions by a distance-measuring device, said method comprising the steps of:

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selecting at least one first measured distance-value from individually measured distance-values to the plurality of distance-measured regions, wherein said selecting is effected, by excluding a plurality of second measured distance-values in response to a determination that the a plurality of second measured distance-values of the individually measured distance-values are not smaller than a predetermined distance value, from individually measured distance-values to the plurality of distance-measured regions by excluding the plurality of second measured distance-values; and

computing an auto-focusing data value in accordance with the selected at least one first measured distance-value.

16. (Previously Amended) A measuring method according to Claim 15, wherein said computing step includes setting the auto-focusing data value to a value equal to a minimum permissible distance value in response to a determination that the computed auto-focusing data value is smaller than the minimum permissible distance value.

17. (Previously Amended) A measuring method according to Claim 15, wherein said computing step includes computing the auto-focusing data value from a mean value of the selected at least one first measured distance-value.

18. (Previously Amended) A measuring method according to Claim 15, wherein said computing step includes computing the auto-focusing data value from a majority of the selected at least one first measured distance-value.

43. (Currently Amended) A computer usable medium for use with a distance-measuring device for measuring individual distances to a plurality of distance-measured regions, said computer usable medium having computer readable program code units embodied therein comprising:

a first program code unit for selecting at least one first measured distance-value from individually measured distance-values to the plurality of distance-measured regions, wherein the selection is effected, by excluding a plurality of second measured distance-values in response to a determination that ~~the~~ a plurality of second measured distance-values of the individually measured distance-values are not smaller than a predetermined distance value, from individually measured distance-values to the plurality of distance-measured regions; by excluding the plurality of second measured distance-values; and

a second program code unit for computing an auto-focusing data value in accordance with the selected at least one first measured distance-value.

44. (Previously Amended) A computer usable medium according to Claim 43, wherein the second program code unit includes a program code unit for setting the auto-focusing data value to a value equal to a minimum permissible distance value in response to a determination that the computed auto-focusing data value is smaller than the minimum permissible distance value.

57. (Currently Amended) A distance-measuring device for measuring individual distances to a plurality of distance-measured regions, the distance-measuring device comprising:

*a selection circuit for selecting at least one measured distance-value for use in focusing by comparing a first measured distance-value of a plurality of individually measured distance-values to a predetermined distance value, wherein if the first measured distance-value is not smaller than the predetermined distance value, said selection circuit compares a second measured distance-value of the plurality of individually measured distance-values to the predetermined distance value and excludes the first measured distance-value from being selected; and*

*a computation circuit for computing an auto-focusing data value in accordance with the at least one measured distance-value selected by said selection circuit,*

*wherein if the second measured distance-value is not smaller than the predetermined distance value, said selection circuit excludes the second measured distance-value from being selected and selects a third measured distance-value of the plurality of individually measured distance-values.*

59. (Previously Amended) A distance-measuring device according to Claim 57, further comprising an ordering circuit for ordering into a predetermined order the plurality of individually measured distance-values before said selection circuit performs the selection.

60. (Previously Added) A distance-measuring device according to Claim 57, wherein said computation circuit sets the auto-focusing data value to a value equal to a minimum permissible distance value when the computed auto-focusing data value is smaller than the minimum permissible distance value.

61. (Previously Added) A distance-measuring device according to Claim 1, further comprising an ordering circuit for ordering into a predetermined order the individually measured distance-values,

wherein said selection circuit performs the selection and exclusion upon the ordered individually measured distance-values in accordance with the predetermined order.

62. (New) A distance-measuring device for measuring individual distances to a plurality of distance-measured regions, said distance-measuring device comprising:

a selection circuit which selects, from individually measured distance-values to the plurality of distance-measured regions, at least one measured distance-value between the shortest distance-value where focusing operation is possible and a predetermined distance-value, regardless of the position of the plurality of distance-measured regions; and

a computation circuit for computing an auto-focusing data value in accordance with the at least one measured distance-value selected by said selection circuit.

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63. (New) A distance-measuring device according to Claim 62, wherein when said selection circuit selects a plurality of measured distance-values, said computation circuit performs the computation of the auto-focusing data value as the average of the plurality of measured distance-values.

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